THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, August 17, 1807.

Memoirs of Lieutenant-General John Graves Simcoe.

THIS highly esteemed and lamented officer was a native of Devonshire, in which county he possessed an estate and beautiful demesne, called Walford Lodge, near Exeter. He was born at the same place, about the year 1750. Being fond from his early youth of military affairs, he entered the army in 1770, as an ensign, in the 35th regiment, then quartered in Exeter. Mr. Simcoe, in consequence of great attention to his duty, was rewarded with the appointment of adjutant to the regiment, in less than two years, his commission bearing date the 27th of March, 1772, and he succeeded to a lieutenancy, March 12, 1774. Among the troops ordered to America, in 1775, was the 35th regiment, and as Lieutenant Simcoe, from his professional knowledge, was justly deserving of notice, he was promoted to a company in the 40th, one of the corps which distinguished itself in that unfortunate contest.

In the course of the war, many provincial battalions were raised in America, one of which was given to Captain Simcoe, and, in compliment to her majesty, called the queen's rangers; of this he was appointed major-commandant. At the head of this corps, which was actively employed, under the most enterprising officers, he exhibited many proofs of his professional talents. In consequence of this, on the 23d of June, 1779, General Sir Henry Clinton, the commander in chief, gave him the local rank of lieutenant-colonel, which was afterwards established in the army. At the peace of 1783, this useful and brave corps, which had so eminently distinguished itself under his orders, was disbanded, but the officers were put on the half-pay list, and had rank in the army. On Lieutenant-Colonel Simcoe's return to England, he retired to enjoy, in tranquillity,

a respite from his labours; but the services he had performed not being unknown to his majesty, he was appointed lieutenant-colonel-commandant to a corps to be raised in America, and to serve in Canada, to which he gave the name of the queen's rangers. On the 18th of November, 1790, he obtained the rank of colonel in the army. By an act of parliament, which passed in the session of 1791, the province of Quebec was divided into Upper and Lower Canada, and each of them was placed under the superintendance of lieutenant-governors, subject to the authority of the governor-general of British America. Colonel Simcoe was appointed lieutenant-governor of the former. Neither ambition nor riches actuated his mind in the acceptance of the appointment, but an inherent principle to make his life useful to his king and country.

On his arrival with his family in Upper Canada, Colonel Simcoe had the country accurately surveyed, and then formed his plans for peopling and improving it. He at first thought of placing the centre of his settlements within the square, formed by the Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron, and Detroit river; but as the Niagara was to be given up to the Americans, he altered his plan. York, situate on the north-west side of Lake Ontario, had been before determined on for the capital, but Governor Simcoe not approving of that plan, intended to fix it on the banks of a river between Huron and Ontario. This was also dropped, and York is now the seat of government. To increase the population was the great and favourite scheme of the new governor, and as he had the allotment of lands vested in him, he was enabled to promote this desirable and useful measure. The families of American officers and soldiers who adhered to the royal cause at the conclusion of the war, obtained grants on the British side of the boundary line, as well as many officers and soldiers of regiments of the regular forces; since that period, emigrants from the mother country and the American states have also been encouraged to settle there. The policy of General Simcoe was to draw as many of the latter as he could, and by means of his mild and disinterested government, to promote a love for the national character of Englishmen in the American states.

To another body of men he held out a share of these lands, we mean half-pay officers; and he thought it an excellent measure to grant discharges to soldiers serving in the regiments then in Canada, who had been a certain number of years in the country, and allot settlements to them. In the mean time, that the corps might not be incomplete, he proposed enlisting Americans, who would soon be attached to the service of his Britannic majesty. These military settlers he intended to occupy the lands on the frontiers towards the American states, and on the banks of the lakes. The inland parts he set apart for

those

those who had emigrated; and, in case of their not being zealously attached to the existing government, the military settlers, from their situation, could act with vigour against them; or, in the event of a war with America, which would be contrary to the interest of both nations, defend the frontiers. A militia formed of such settlers, might, in those instances, prove nearly as useful as a regular corps. In pursuance of these plans, Colonel Simcoe, on all occasions, gave encouragement and assistance to those who applied for lands, or who were already in possession of them. The consequence of this was that, in a short space of time, he saw that his government was capable, not only of supplying grain for home consumption, but also for exportation. Cattle of all kinds were also reared in abundance, although, in former times, flour was sent from England, and meat and butter from Ireland, for the use of the troops, at an enormous expence. The lakes also, in his opinion, were capable of furnishing fish, particularly sturgeon, in such vast quantities, as to afford the means of carrying on a trade with Europe, in competition with Russia, which supplies England, and other countries, to a great amount. He, therefore, strongly recommended this to the settlers. In short, the whole of his conduct, during the time he enjoyed the government of Upper Canada, was honourable, liberal, and admirably calculated to lay the foundations of private and public prosperity. Justice was administered under his auspices, according to the principles of the British constitution. The lieutenants of counties, appointed by him, had authority to nominate respectable men to be justices of the peace, and officers of militia; while over these he himself kept a watchful eye.

After remaining five years in this settlement, Governor Simcoe returned to England, to the great regret of all the inhabitants, who will long cherish a grateful remembrance of his paternal care of their interests, as well as of his private virtues.

On the 3d of October, 1794, he was promoted to the rank of major-general, and a new field was soon opened for the exercise of his talents. The situation of the island of St. Domingo, which had been taken possession of by troops from Jamaica, in September, 1793, requiring a person of talents to take the command of it, as civil governor, and commander in chief, in the room of Sir Adam Williamson, his majesty found none more deserving so important a station than Major-General Simcoe, who was appointed, with the local rank of lieutenant-general, the 3d of December, 1796. The nomination of this officer was very acceptable to all ranks in the island, in which he arrived during February of the following year. Having in some measure retrieved the military affairs, which were at this time nearly hopeless, General Simcoe turned his thoughts to

the civil government of the colony, the expenditure of which was immense, and the revenues but trivial. The duties on import and export, he found necessary to increase, and they were paid without a murmur by those immediately concerned. Several other regulations were made and enforced, the good effects of which were soon visible; but, in the midst of this gleam of prosperity, the colony was deprived of its governor, who returned to England in the month of July, in the same year. Perhaps the consequent evils, and final evacuation, of this valuable island, would not have occurred, had he been properly supported from the mother country; short, however, as his stay was, he did more than any former general, in conciliating the native inhabitants to the British government.

On the 18th of July, 1798, his majesty, as a reward for his services, was pleased to confer on him the command of the 22d regiment of foot; shortly after his return to England, he was employed on the staff; and on the 3d of October, 1798, he was made a lieutenant-general. During the time the immense preparations were making in all the French ports, in 1801, for the avowed purpose of an invasion, the important command of the town of Plymouth, the county of Devon, &c. was intrusted to him; and from the uncommon exertions he made in disciplining the volunteer corps, and persuading every man who could bear arms to come forward, there is little doubt but the enemy, had they attempted to land in that part of the country, would have received a severe check. In consequence of the treaty of Amiens, the war establishment being laid aside, the name of General Simcoe ceased to appear on the staff list; but since hostilities recommenced, was among the lieutenant-generals employed, and commanded the western or Plymouth district.

When in the summer of 1806 the earl of St. Vincent proceeded with a division of the Channel fleet to Lisbon, General Simcoe was one of the military officers by whom he was accompanied. On the departure of the noble admiral from the Tagus, General Simcoe returned in the Illustrious to England, where he had been destined to succeed Lord Lake in the chief command of the British forces in India. His lady was in London making the necessary preparations for the voyage, when she received the melancholy intelligence of his death a few days after his arrival at Torbay. His country has thus been deprived of a meritorious and skilful officer, and his widow and nine children of an excellent husband and father.

As a military man, General Simcoe was often consulted by those high in office, and was a member of every board of general officers ordered by his majesty. In fact, few gentlemen in the service were more capable of deciding on professional affairs, whether respecting discipline, or interior economy. He

was

was also highly esteemed by a numerous circle of friends of the first respectability, and his opinion and advice were taken in matters of the most interesting nature, for which he was eminently qualified, by his good sense and knowledge of the world. He excelled in classical learning; few officers in the army having received a better education.

POSTCRIPT

TO

"THE RING,

A Moral Tale.

(Continued from Page 627.)

FIDGET, who had entered the room as soon as his lordship made his exit, stood staring at her lady, with the lappet still suspended in her hand. Her ladyship was too much lost in thought to observe her, and sat totally silent. Fidget felt in herself a violent propensity to set her tongue a-going on the occasion; the business she was well acquainted with, though she durst not own it, having conveniently applied her ear to the key-hole for information. But as her lady was still dumb, and there must be some mode to open a parley, began with—

"La! bless me, my lady, what can possibly have happened to put your ladyship into such a *fantigue?* why you are quite *quandaryish*, as a body may say. As sure as this lappet in my hand is point lace, his honour, my lord, has been in some of his tantrums again?"

Her ladyship looked steadily at her confident for some time, without speaking; when at last she exclaimed—"Oh! Fidget, I am undone!"

"Undone? well may I never stir, if I did not think some such thing, when his honour, my lord, parted beds. Well, my lady, you are to do as you please; but if I had such a husband, I would give it him on both sides of his ears, and tightly too, ay, and plump in the face into the bargain, before I would be undone. I say undone indeed! But dear, my lady, what *can* be the matter?"

"I must be dragged into the country."

"The country!"

"Ay, there compelled to take root, like one of his old oaks. To be looked up to, the tree of compassion, spreading my benevolent branches over all the beggars and their brats for twenty miles round."

Her

Her ladyship could have met death with some fortitude; but being buried alive, and the country at that season, was literally being buried, was the worst of deaths, nor would she submit to it. To her faithful counsellor then she applied, what step could be taken to reverse the decree, and prevent perpetual banishment.

"Truly, my lady, I wish as I was wise enough to advise; but if it could be brought about, that your ladyship could live in London, without costing his honour, my lord, any money, why perhaps the storm would blow over."

"But how is that to be done?"

"Let me see—there is Lady Frisk, Lady Lure, Lady Languish, the Countess of Catch-at, the Duchess of Dew-lip, and a dozen or two more, all spend thousands in a year more than their husbands' whole estate, and nobody enquires about it. And moreover than that, some of their lords get places and pensions, and finger hush money into the bargain."

"What do you mean?"

"La! my lady, I *hears* from ladies' maids, my acquaintance, what would make a poor body stare; and if I was ill-used, as your ladyship is, I would serve his lordship a trick, I warrant me. Where is the king, that would not give his crown for such a beautiful lady as your ladyship?"

"What! dishonour my husband's bed?"

"Dear me, fine ladies use such hard words! But where is the harm, when nobody would know nothing of the matter, excepting poor Fidget, who would die before she would hurt so good a lady."

"Fidget, you have made me really angry."

"Dear, my lady, don't be angry, and I will tell you something."

"What have you to tell me?"

"Why the other night when John brought the things out of the supper-room, says John, says he, I will lay my head to the ninth nail in a horse shoe, if Bumpkin Bounce (like an impudent fellow as he is! for it is not for such as he to nick-name gentlefolks, if quality does it); so, says John, I will lay my head to the ninth nail in a horse shoe, if Bumpkin Bounce is not casting a sheep's eye at my lady. To be sure she is a treat for an emperor. What would not I give for such a tit bit myself!"

The countess would hear no more, and ordered her handmaid not to come into her presence 'till she rung. But as Bumpkin Bounce will make no inconsiderable figure in the following pages, we will, whilst her ladyship is ruminating on the hint, and digesting her thoughts in soliloquy, beg leave to introduce him to the reader's acquaintance.

This

This gentleman was the son and heir of Sir Andrew Chucklehead, a very ancient and numerous family; not a town or village in England, but could boast some exploit, worthy record, either from the root, or some collateral branch. Sir Andrew was as good a judge of a bit of horse flesh as any man in the county, and though he could not very clearly read the different pedigrees, yet with great application, and repeated spellings, hammered them so well into his head at last, to repeat them all by heart. With his groom, his horses, his hounds, and brother fox-hunters, he enjoyed himself so well, to have little time upon hand; that little too, had its appropriate avocations. All the farmers' daughters, milk maids, together with ladies of the mop, bucket, and broom, of every description that he could get at, fell victims to his fine address, and insinuating tongue; and the parish so amply provided with bastards, exhibiting such a shew of stout, strong, healthy, robust little rogues, as could not fail in time, properly trained, to greatly recruit his majesty's forces, and thereby add to the strength and defence of the country; and in this alone his patriotism consisted.

With a thick head, a broad pair of shoulders, a wholesome, ruddy, fat, flat, unmeaning face, he possessed at times a little good nature, though feeling he had none. This good nature was strongly exemplified in a very sensible and discreet marriage with his cook maid, who on her knees, drowned in tears, besought him to prevent her disgrace, in bringing a child into the world in her *virgin* state; and to make her an *honest* woman, before her shape took a peculiar turn, that would compel her to hang herself in her own garters; after which dreadful deed, such was her fondness, that to be near him, she would be obliged to so haunt him, that her ghost should never quit him as long as he lived. Melted by her tears, and frightened with her shadow, Parson Saygrace made them one. Her ladyship, as the cook now was, released, by marriage, from certain bracings and confinements, preferred ease to a fine shape, and disclosed to the wondering crowd nothing more than that the parson had not said grace in time. The fox-hunters heartily smacked her lips, and wished her joy; the ladies passed by her at church with a contemptuous sneer, for more reasons than one; so that the wives of the baronet's tradesmen were all the female society she could boast: notwithstanding her own, and Sir Andrew's repeated declaration, that a marriage had been solemnized a twelvemonth before, which, for reasons, had been concealed, and that they had visited the altar a *second* time merely to put the matter out of doubt.

Every thing was provided in great style, against the time of her ladyship's accouchement; but it unluckily happened, that this said Bumkin Bounce thrust himself, in a very unmannerly way, into the world, full two months earlier than Sir Andrew

could reasonably expect so great an honour, and instead of galloping on in a career of full joy, his hobby turned tail, and rode restive. But as the butcher and baker's wives, the nurse, and other dames, well instructed by facts, declared it a very common circumstance for ladies to produce a *first* born, stout and healthy, at *seven* months, the baronet's rage began to subside; more especially, as the nurse, Mrs. Dawdle, the maid, and even her ladyship herself, violently asserted, that the dear, *beautiful*, *lovely* little fellow was as like him as possible, which would literably have been the case, had the baronet's features borne any resemblance to those of the butler's, whose prototype, in miniature, the new-born son and heir to the Chucklehead title and estate most undoubtedly was. Whether it was this, or any other cause, we cannot say, but the fond mother gave him a most impassioned kiss, declaring she loved him to such a degree, being the picture of dear papa, that she was afraid of making Sir Andrew jealous.

This little fracas being amicably adjusted, things went on in their usual way for about two years, when a trifling accident put the house again, for a time, in a bustle; this was nothing more than Sir Andrew being brought home with his neck broke, in a fox chace. But this event did not take place before a will had been duly executed, in which his precious rib was handsomely provided for, on condition of her never entering again into the married state; to the great disappointment of the butler. The young Sir Andrew was left under the guardianship of a brother sportsman, as wise and learned as the deceased baronet himself; and as his mama was immoderately fond of her son, prudently gave him up to her guidance, to be educated as her ladyship should think fit.

The boy was sent to school out of the way, as soon as he was of an age for observation. The butler took all the trouble of governing the house, and her ladyship enjoyed a state of uninterrupted felicity, save and except a few times being seized with an alarming complaint, apparently of a *dropsical* tendency, which compelled her to go to London for advice, and where some eminent physician always produced a cure. But although the boy was kept pretty close to school, to prevent his prying into family secrets, yet it was with strict injunctions not to thwart him in any respect, for that learning would come of itself, when he grew old enough, and to wait with patience 'till then: but the master's patience began to wear, without the smallest hope of the promised harvest, and to his sincere regret, and mortification, found he was only labouring in a barren soil; but if the application of birch to a certain part approaching to the heel, would have taken flight upward, and sent anything into the head, the youth, notwithstanding the prohibition, had had a fair trial; but all attempts at improvement were vain.

Though nature had neither gifted his head with a grain of sense, or his heart with feeling, she had made large amends in craft and cunning. In scenes of mischief, he was the first to lead the way, not with an open boldness of true spirit, courageously braving all danger, but by undermining, lying, and subterfuge, in which he had no equal, gained every point; and would lay schemes with an adroitness, and depth of penetration, that fairly distanced the brightest capacities in the school.

An estate of 20,000l. per annum, accumulating during a minority of nineteen years, rendered him, at twenty one, a man of immense fortune, and introduced him to the first circles, where he soon became the *butt* of all company, whilst his, in return, was generally courted, from the certainty of having something to laugh at. He fancied himself a man of wit and humour, studied hard all old proverbial and quaint sayings, which he daily retailed, with other vulgar coinages of the day. If he was asked particulars of an affair in which he had been a principal actor, he would pretend to consider—tip the company a wink—thrust out his cheek with his tongue—with various other mysterious hints, of great and important matter; and when he had raised something like curiosity, put on a broad vacant stare, and declare "he knew no more of the business, *than a dog did of his father!* having been *sucking the monkey* 'till the wine had washed his brains into his boots.

If he heard a piece of news, approaching to scandal, after manufacturing it anew, he would run about from house to house, puffing and blowing, pretending to be almost breathless, telling the company he had brought it them piping hot, all in a lump, as the *Devil found sixpence;* and had been as busy in collecting, as one of *his imps in a gale of wind:* with other witticisms of the same sort. And as his uncouth, awkward manners would not admit of the least polishing, he was first nick-named *Bumkin;* but his extraordinary skill in the *traveller's talent*, as no one could depend on the truth of a word he uttered, his friends added *Bounce;* so he was constantly called *Bumkin Bounce:* a title he greatly admired, conceiving it an acknowledgement of fine parts, and genuine wit, and by which appellation we shall hereafter distinguish him.

But as if the fates had determined to exert all their skill in the game of cross purposes, this man, or rather this brute, was selected as the being to rival the noble, the virtuous, the sensible, the learned, and elegantly accomplished Lord Grandfield, in the affections of his beauteous wife, at least to share with him the charms of her person; and to be the primary cause also of bringing the countess herself, to ruin, infamy, shame, and death!

Her ladyship having, by this time, digested a little succession of obtruding thought, it may be proper to attend to the result.

We have depicted our heroine a woman of beauty, fine sense, genius, and accomplishments; but this was, when nature, under proper guidance, gave to reason fair play, before she had veiled, and hoodwinked herself under the influence of passion, before the penetrating judgement of Lady Basto—(how a first cause should be guarded against!)—with her usual perception, discovered a rich soil, where the seeds of a fatal and destructive impulse, "the foul fiend," unknown to the then innocent possessor, had concealed in embryo, and whose scientific skill, stimulated by her own necessities, the infamous viscountess, dead to all sense of shame and feeling, determined to cultivate and nourish into life and bloom. It must be remembered too that from the first pruning, the plant, naturally strong, notwithstanding the chilling blasts of remonstrance, throve and grew healthy. The warm fervour of a softer passion, suddenly suppressing, as by storm, checked the rapidity of its extravagant growth; it drooped for a time, 'till transplanted into the hot bed of fashion, it again began to shoot and branch out into such exuberance of foliage, as neither admonition could stem, or the certainty of ruin root out.

(To be continued)

THE DREAM ACCOMPLISHED;

An Anecdote from the Correspondence of Cardinal Bembo.

Sir,

THE life of man, as is well known, may be divided into two different states of existence, the state of sleep and that of being awake. We often pass from one to the other by an intermediate state, which retains the body in its soporific lethargy, but permits the faculties of the soul to display a part of their activity. This is the state of dreaming, a happy moment, well known to feeling minds, and whence often proceeds our most sublime ideas.

Dreams may precede a perfect or sound sleep, as well as being an interval between sleeping and waking; during the night even we often have various dreams, which are more or less agreeable according to circumstances. But in my opinion there is a great difference between the dreams of the night and those of the morning: in the evening our bodies yield overwhelmed with fatigue; but our soul remains active in spite of it, and feeds upon the newly awakened reminiscence of those ideas which occupied it during the day: in the morning the body is refreshed, and the soul, which first rouses from its state of torpor, occupies itself with new vigour about those objects which are to form part of this contemplation. If the dreams of the evening

evening are recollections of the passed, those of the morning are presentiments of the future, which are often realised, and which seem strongly to prove that our soul is of a nature superior to all conception. Where is the man, who, awakening in the morning, has not had more elevated views of his affairs, of his situation, and of those things to which his affections most incline him? These perceptions of our soul, which seem to anticipate the actions of our life, do they not bespeak its noble and immmortal origin?

A pure air, a mild temperature, and a soft fresh wind, favour eminently that gentle sleep which is so favourable to dreams and reveries. Tasso felt this powerfully when he said,

" Ei venticelli dibattendo l'ali
" Lusingavano il sonno di mortali."

You will excuse, Sir, these reflections upon dreams: alas! they form too often the happiest part of our existence. I do not wish to establish a theory; but I thought these few prefatory strictures would not be improper to the recital of a fact, which appears to be too remarkable to remain in oblivion.

Italian literature, like that of other countries, has its collections of printed letters, by celebrated people. In France, this department has been principally filled by women; in England, a few men of letters, Pope, Swift, Johnson, Gray and others, have left behind them epistolary memorials; in Italy, they have been principally written by poets and prelates. A collection filled with pieces of this kind, and all classical, having fallen into my hands,* my attention was called to one written in 1512 by the learned Cardinal Bembo, to a nobleman of the house of Medici, who had acquired the cognomen of the magnificent. History mentions him under the name of Julian, duke of Nemours, husband of Philibert of Savoy.

The family of Medicis, destined to reign over Tuscany, had been exiled three times from Florence in less than a century; three times they had returned to it, more rich, more respectable, and more powerful; and the duke of Nemours, of whom I have spoken, exiled in 1494, did not return to his country 'till the very year in which this letter is dated.

The celebrity of Cardinal Bembo, the grandeur of the personage to whom he wrote, and the contents of the letter have all stimulated me to translate it. It contains an account of a dream of the cardinal's mother, which, as will be seen, was but too unhappily accomplished. It is as follows:

" Magnificent Lord—I reply to a letter, in which you have expressed a wish to know the nature of a dream of my mother's,

* Raccolta di rime e prose dell' abbate Tagliazucchi, vol. ii.

which revealed to her during the night what was to happen to me the next day. To satisfy your curiosity, I shall add to my answer an account of its accomplishment.

"At the time my father was ambassador from your nation to Rome, under the pontificate of Pope Innocent, I found myself detained at Venice, with my mother, by a process, which our family had to sustain against a gentleman, a countryman of our's, called Simon Goro. This Goro sent off here one of his nephews, called Giusto, to plead in his name against me. One morning, as I was coming out of my chamber with the papers in my hand, which I was to lay before the magistrate who had the decision of our suit, I met my mother, who advanced towards me, and asked me whither I was going? Upon my reply, she recommended me not to have any dispute on that day with Giusto, and to confine myself merely to presenting my papers to the judges in his presence. She repeated her request upon this subject very often, which appeared to me so singular, that I could not help asking her the reason. 'I will tell you,' replied she: 'I dreamed this night that Giusto wounded you in the right hand. You know how often my dreams have been verified; therefore, I entreat you, my dear child, endeavour to have no altercation with that man.' I promised her. We parted; and I repaired to the tribunal.

"Having met Guisto, I accosted him amicably, and shewing him the papers which I had, I told him I was going to lay them before the judges. Giusto, older than I by some years, had already hurt his reputation, and even deranged his head by his bad conduct. He snatched the papers from my hand, turned his back, went out of the palace, and took to flight. In this situation I walked towards the Rialto, which is the most frequented promenade in Venice. I felt melancholy and depressed. But it was not long before I met Giusto there, who, after the villainy he had played upon me, assumed an insolent and insulting air; the thing went so far, that at last we came to arms. My adversary wounded me in the second finger of the right hand, and cut it so deep in the first joint that it nearly fell off. Thus was accomplished the dream of my mother, which I look upon rather as a revelation; and I declare to you, magnificent lord, by that veneration which we owe to God himself, that this recital is the pure and simple truth."

After the perusal of this letter, can any one say what are those laws which thus identify the movements of the imagination with the accidents of human life? The mystery is above our intelligence. Too often the dupes of blind credulity, let us confess, that sometimes we may be no less the dupes of incredulity.

I remain, &c.

July 9, 1807. SOMNUS,

On

On the characteristic Excellencies of three female Singers, Mara, Catalani, and Billington.

EVERY one knows the superiority of the human voice over any instrument hitherto invented. The most obvious cause of this, is the impracticability of conveying ideas, and a correspondent melody, at the same instant, by artificial means. Another reason to be assigned, is the impossibility of transfusing into a mere machine, that degree of feeling which is continually necessary to interest the hearer, and which is effected with so little labour by the experienced vocal performer. Besides this, it might be maintained, that the rich tones of the voice in its improved state are altogether inimitable. It is not a matter of wonder, therefore, that we hear with so much delight and interest the singer, whose voice has been rendered by cultivation at once the vehicle of thought, feeling, and diversified melody.

On this account the lovers of music have all paid a tribute of applause to the three singers who have most distinguished themselves in this country, Mara, Catalani, and Billington. To ascertain, however, the degree of commendation due to each, it will be necessary to estimate their comparative merits. The task is not an easy one, and it is with diffidence that I submit the following remarks to the judgement of the reader.

To begin then with something like a criterion. If it were asked, what are the essential qualities of a good singer common to all the different departments, in which the human voice may be employed, the following four would easily suggest themselves:

1. A full, clear, and flexible voice, capable of wide compass, and perfect in its tones.
2. An easiness and nicety of articulation.
3. A variety of ornament suited to the character of the music.
4. An appropriate pathos.

These four at least, it must be allowed, are obviously requisite, and, assumed as a criterion, may enable us to enter upon the comparison with greater confidence.

I do not conceive Mara to have been deficient in any of these qualifications. With a voice equal to any province of music, she excelled particularly in the oratorio. Despising the frippery of a style at the present day too much admired, her expression and modulation were equally chaste and elegant. She never condescended to prettinesses. Her cadenzas were appropriate and dignified, yet varied at every repetition. I need but appeal to those who ever heard her sing, "I know that

my

my redeemer liveth," or " Farewell ye limpid springs," to confirm me in the assertion, that she had a wonderful command of the passions of her audience. She seemed to have taken pains to divest herself of the grimace of the country in which she was educated, and, with very few exceptions, to have succeeded. Compared with Billington or Catalani, her voice was not extensive, yet this defect was never sufficiently perceived to be regretted. In a word, to those who admire Handel, (and I wish he were more generally admired!) Mara would appear, of all others, the best adapted for the noblest purpose to which her art can possibly be applied, viz. the true expression of the sublime and pathetic.

Mrs. Billington, in compass of voice and rapidity of execution, as far as I am able to judge, stands unrivalled. Yet her defects are many and great. Though possessed of great facility of modulation, she scarcely ever varies her cadenzas upon a repetition. The lower notes of her voice are not to firm as those of Mara, who is inferior to her in the strength and sweetness of the higher. It is, perhaps, the bad taste of the day which induces her to dwell so long and so frequently upon a shake, to the utter disgust of every admirer of genuine ornament. In pathetic music she seldom shews sensibility, and consequently seldom excites it. I remember to have observed in that exquisite part of the song above mentioned, " Farewell thou busy world," Mrs. Billington exhibited as little feeling as the book which she held in her hand. Songs of the same character with the " Soldier tired of war's alarms," or bravuras as they have been termed, which would by no means suit Madam Mara, serve to place Mrs. Billington's powers in their proper light. In fine, she may be characterised as a brilliant and astonishing singer, who never touches the finer feelings, who has contributed in no small degree to pervert the public taste, and who, compared to Mara, appears as inferior as the lowest species of lyric poetry is to the epos.

Of Madam Catalani there are a variety of opposite opinions. I shall express my own judgment freely, without wishing to bias or to dictate. In the dramatic music of the opera, this singer seems, if not perfect, at least far superior to any performer ever heard in this country: for, besides a voice equal to the most difficult execution, she possesses an interesting countenance, graceful gesture, and elegant person. Nothing can be more puerile and absurd than the report that she does not sing in tune. It is in opposition to the judgment of the first musicians, who not only deny the fact, but give her credit for a most accurate ear. Every one must instantly be struck with her easy and clear articulation, which is so essential a qualification for the stage. Her tones are full and liquid: her cadenzas appropriate and masterly. In chromatic passages, which,

which, it may be observed, should be seldom introduced, she has acquired a wonderful clearness and rapidity. Nor does she avail herself, in any instance where celerity is requisite, of the *staccato* method of expression constantly used by Billington, and which is allowed by professional persons to be mere trick. We find in this singer that mellowness and distinctness combined, to which Mara first taught us to affix a just value.

Such are the leading excellencies of Catalani. But we must not omit to mention that she has brought with her from the continent an unmeaning smile, I had almost said, grimace, which to the dispassionate and unprejudiced observer, cannot fail to be disgusting. It is obtruded upon us without discrimination in the most affecting, no less than in the most frivolous passages. Whether she profess love, relate facts, or beg for life itself, we are assailed by the same inconsistent distortion of the features. It would be an act of kindness to apprize her of the contempt which so conspicuous a piece of affectation must produce in an English audience. Nor would there be any impropriety in proposing to her for a model the science, taste, and dignity of Madam Mara. Catalani, though young, has already the merit of great purity of manner, and sweetness of tone; and by a judicious imitation of Mara, if she can be induced to avoid the nauseous and meretricious ornaments of singing, adopted by Braham and Billington, it is highly probable that she may eventually prove the finest singer in the world.

A. B. E.

Results of the Russian Embassy to Japan and China.

THE following particulars have recently been received from Prince of Wales's Island, respecting the two Russian ships Nadeshda and Neva, which were sent on an expedition to China, after touching on the north-west coast of America.

The objects of their voyage were both political and commercial, and they arrived at Macao in December, 1805. The Nadeshda carried a Russian ambassador to Japan, where the ships remained for four or five months, to repair the damage they had suffered in a gale. Every assistance was afforded them in this way, and they were supplied with abundance of provisions; but they were scarcely allowed to have any intercourse with the inhabitants, and were not permitted to trade with them in any manner whatever. The government would not receive the ambassador, and very little intercourse was allowed beyond the exchange of letters and compliments, so that the object of the expedition may be said to have totally failed.

On their first arrival at Macao, they experienced some difficulty and delay getting up to Whampoa, 'till the Chinese were assured that they were not men of war, but had come for the purpose of trading. They were then allowed to come up, and reached Whampoa about the end of December. They carried on their business in the usual way; sold their skins tolerably well, and laid in a cargo of high-priced teas, with a considerable quantity of nankeens, and some silk piece-goods.

Captain Krusenstern had the chief command of the expedition. His ship, the Nadeshda, belonged to the Russian government; but the other was the property of the Russian American company, to whom the emperor gave his ship for the voyage, free of expence; besides patronizing the undertaking to a great extent. The chief commercial object was to open and establish an intercourse between St. Petersburgh and Canton, by sea. The company had appointed an agent, or supercargo, to transact the purchase and sales, and the whole of the commercial part was submitted to his direction. A dispatch had been sent to Pekin, to inform the emperor of the arrival of the ships, and no objection was made about allowing them to sell and purchase in the mean time; or to their getting a security-merchant; but they could not be allowed to depart 'till the emperor's answer came. To this little attention was paid, and Captain Krusenstern prepared to sail, and applied for his grand chop; on which two men of war's boats were sent down to Whampoa, to lie by each of the ships, which created such alarm, that no provisions were carried on board them for two days. The commodore remonstrated with the security-merchant, and represented that such steps were considered by the Europeans as amounting very nearly to hostile measures; advising him to represent the circumstances to the viceroy. Captain Krusenstern also sent in a moderate remonstrance himself, and concluded with demanding his grand chop, as further delay would be of material injury to his voyage. The restrictions at Whampoa were on this immediately removed, and in a few days the grand chops for both were issued. They left Whampoa on the 9th of February, 1806, and on the 12th or 14th, the imperial edict arrived at Canton from Pekin; but the ships having sailed, its contents were only imperfectly known. It was, however, understood, that the purport of it was by no means favourable to the Russians; that the emperor did not approve of the continuance of the intercourse by sea, but recommended the old mode by caravans, which he pronounced the best for the Russians, and the most agreeable to him. Some trivial questions were also inserted as to the motives for the voyage; how the Russians could have found their way to China, and if they had been in England? On the whole, it was evident that there was a strong jealousy on the part of the

Chinese at the good understanding which they perceived to exist between the English and Russians.

When this event happened at Whampoa, no intelligence had been received of the grand embassy by land, from St. Petersburgh to Pekin, the failure of which has been ascertained since.

Epitaph for John Wannell, a Youth who was drowned at Exmouth, August 8, 1807, *whilst bathing near the Point; his Body was found next Day.*

WARM with the heat of summer's beam,
Yet more the glow of youthful blood,
I plung'd in Exmouth's glittering stream,
Nor fear'd its tide, or eddying flood.
But soon my feet could find no ground,
My spirit fail'd, and stopp'd my breath;
In vain I cast my eyes around,
Then heav'd a sigh, and sunk in death.
Ye who stand firm around my grave;
No more shall keep your feet than I;
Know that each breath is but a wave,
That wafts you to eternity.

Exmouth, August 10, 1807.

BON-MOT OF MR. SHERIDAN.

THERE is frequently much truth in a jest, and such a jest deserves to be recorded. The Castle Spectre produced large receipts at Drury-lane Theatre. About the end of the season, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Lewis, the author, had some dispute in the green-room, when the latter offered, in confirmation of his arguments, to bet Mr. Sheridan all the money which the Castle Spectre had brought, he was right. "No," said Mr. Sheridan, "I can't afford to bet so much; but I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll bet you *all its worth!*"

Answer, by W. Backhouse, of Evercreech, to R. Maffett's Question, inserted March 2.

THE square root of the sum of the squares of half each diagonal = 10 chains, the side of the parallelogram, and the product of one diagonal by half the other = 96 square chains, or 9 acres, 2 roods, 16 perches, the area.—Q. E. D.

Answer, by W. D. of Briſtol, to W. Bickham's Anagram, inserted June 22.

WHERE is the man that e'er can rest
When mad DESPAIR sits in his breast?

Answer, by J. Woodman, of North Curry, to J. Whitnell's Rebus, inserted June 22.

IF I my mind must now declare,
The foreign river's DELAWARE.

☞ We have received the like answer from W D. Champion, of Bridgewater; T. Wyatt, J. Joyce, and R. Loosemore, of Tiverton; J. A. Dyer, of Taunton; J. R. S. R. of Awliscombe; S. D. and G. A. Arden, of South Petherton; a private of the loyal Menceage volunteers; H. Ellis, of Exeter; W. D. of Brittol; H. Easter, of Poole; and W. H. H. of Totnes.

Answer, by Tim. Eringo, of Plymouth Dock, to the Menceage Volunteer's Charade, inserted June 29.

STEEL-YARD's a balance much in use,
In towns and market places,
'Tis often found it doth abuse
Justice, in all her graces.

☞ We have received the like answer from W. D. of Bristol; J. Ryan, of Stonehouse; S. D. of South Petherton; J. R. S. R. of Awliscombe J. Badcock, and R. Pentreath, of Mousehole; Hester Easter, of Poole; W. D. Champion, of Bridgewater; J. A. Dyer, of Taunton; T. Coumbe, of St. German's; a private of the Helstone artillery; G. Spry, of Egg Buckland; T. Wyatt, J. Joyce, and R Loosemore, of Tavistock; P. Ninnis, of Tavistock; Corporal Colley, of the St. German's volunteers; H. Ellis, of Exeter; J. Whitnell, of Street; and J. R. Norris, of Taunton.

A REBUS, *by Walter, of the Plymouth Volunteers.*

SEARCH holy writ, there you may see
A mount that must transposed be;
Subtract one letter from the same,
And then you'll read a liquor's name;
In yonder village seek and try,
'Tis there my second you'll espy:
Unite these parts, then you'll explain
A place that ruins many a swain.

A CHARADE, *by P. Ninnis, of Tavistock.*

SEE, see the rich and debonnair,
And the courteous winning fair,
Listening to melodious strains
At my gay first, where pleasure reigns;
Lo my next, uprais'd with glee,
Around the table merrily,
Laughing, sporting, care destroying,
Nought but time and sense enjoying:
Lastly my whole, the scene to grace,
With lords and ladies have a place,
To assist the curious eye
ifferent objects to descry.

POETRY.

For the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

ABSENCE.

HEAVENS! what a weight of woe is this!
How sad the lingering moments prove!
Fled are the golden dreams of bliss,
The smiles of beauty and of love.

Lost is the form that charm'd me oft,
When evening ting'd the glowing west;
And lost the voice that, sweetly soft,
Sooth'd all the sorrows of my breast.

Ah happy swains! that still remain
Where Anna's matchless charms appear;
Ye little dream how fierce the pain
Of absence from a nymph so fair.

Yet love, celestial love! inspires,
My faithful heart with joy serene;
Still cherishes my fond desires,
And gilds with joy the dreary scene.

For the WEEKLY ENTETAIRNER.

MORTAL LIFE.*

SAY what is LIFE?—a breath; a dream;
A bubble on a rapid stream;
A lurid shade with scarce a ray;
A cold and stormy winter's day;
A kindled meteor in the air;
A blast that leaves the vintage bare;
The gilded bauble of a name;
A pitfall; an expiring flame;
A rustling leaf before a gale;
A short, but interesting tale;
A single turn on fortune's wheel;
The trackless furrow of a keel;
A dying spark on ocean toss'd;
A race in which the stakes are lost;
A pendent dew-drop on a thorn;
An exile waiting to return;
The shifting scen'ry of a stage;
The closing curtain's sure presage;
A sinking pulse; a waning moon;
A feeble sun that sets at noon;
A bird of passage in her flight;
A gleam that shoots athwart the sight;
An ebbing tide; a baseless tow'r;
A Saturn eager to devour;
The stealth of night; the lapse of prime;
The glass and scythe of meagre time;

* See page 579.

A figure painted bold and rude;
A desert where wild beasts intrude;
A road thro' coarse uneven ground;
A voyage where rocks and shoals abound;
An arrow's path; the morning's dawn;
A shadow from a dial thrown;
The narrow bounds of haughty pride;
To death, to worms, to dust allied;
Corruption's child, and future prey;
Crush'd by the moth; what shall I say?
A falling star; a transient flower;
A passing cloud; an autumn shower;
A flying shuttle; nay, a span;
So short and frail the LIFE OF MAN.

Dock, Devon.

For the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

LANCASHIRE LADIES.

THE fair Lancashire ladies are witches we're told;
What a strange, unaccountable error!
They are beings divine, by a *substantive* bold
Made objects that strike us with terror.

Those mortals who, blindly, such errors lie under,
Much lack a grammatical guide;
An *adjective* truly corrects the rude blunder,
Of the *substantive* thus misapplied.

Then say they are charming, and lively, and gay,
That every grace they are rich in,
That they warble as sweetly as thrushes in May;
Not *witches*—but truly *bewitching*.

Shaston. VIGIL.

ADDRESS *to the* MOON.

ON these tall cliffs,* that rise above the flood,
And o'er its banks, in sullen grandeur, throw
Their frowning heads—oft has the wand'rer stood,
And seen thee stoop to kiss the waves below.

Or down the Avon's side, by thy pale beam,
Alone and pensive I delight to stray,
And watch thy shadow trembling in his stream,
Or mark thy faint light on his surface play.

Sweet, silent deity! thy gentle sway,
Sheds soft repose upon this troubl'd breast,
While fancy dreams—and dream the poet may—
That in thy silver sphere the wretch shall rest.

There, on the banks of streams, as amber clear,
(E'en here, the pensive spirit's fond retreat)
Shall friend meet friend, by absence render'd dear,
And kindred souls, no more forbidden, meet.

E'en now, methinks, that lovers' pray'rs and sighs,
Commingling mount, like incense, to the skies,
While one soft vow, more grateful than the rest,
Seems heav'd from sympathy's, or Mary's breast.

* St. Vincent's Rocks.